

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 IO-03
SAJ-01 ACDA-10 PM-03 L-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
OMB-01 TRSE-00 SP-02 EB-04 /058 W
-----111848Z 011525 /46

P R 111818Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5586
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 02673

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PGOV WB GW GE US UK FR
SUBJECT: ALLIED-FRG CONSULTATIONS ON BERLIN AND
INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE FRENCH HAVE SUGGESTED IN THE BONN GROUP THE REINSTITUTION OF REGULAR CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE THREE ALLIED AMBASSADORS AND A SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THE CHANCELLERY. THE IDEA HAS MERIT, CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT WE CONTINUE TO BE INADEQUATELY INFORMED OF THE STATE OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FRENCH PROPOSAL COULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF UNDERCUTTING THE ROLE OF THE BONN GROUP AS OUR PRINCIPAL FORUM FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GERMANS AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE RESENTED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER, WHO HAS HIS OWN DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING INFORMATION FROM THE CHANCELLERY. IF THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR REITERATES HIS PROPOSAL FORMALLY TO STATE SECRETARY GEHLHOFF AT
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THE FEBRUARY 17 QUADRIPARTITE LUNCHEON, I THUS PLAN TO GIVE IT ONLY QUALIFIED SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE FRENCH REP (BOISSIEU) STATED AT THE FEBRUARY 7 BONN GROUP MEETING THAT THE INTERACTION BETWEEN BERLIN ISSUES AND INNER-GERMAN PROBLEMS AND RELATIONS HAS BECOME THE MOST IMPORTANT DIFFICULTY FOR THE THREE

ALLIES AND THE FRG SINCE THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT. REFERRING TO THE RECENT GDR ACTIONS IN BERLIN AND TO THE INTERVIEW BY STATE SECRETARY GAUS IN SPIEGEL, BOISSIEU STATED THAT THIS INTERACTION HAS BECOME MORE VISIBLE OF LATE.

2. BECAUSE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE POLICY OF THE FRG TOWARD THE GDR, BOISSIEU CONTINUED, IT MIGHT BE WORTHWHILE TO RESUME AN OLD TRADITION -- THE REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE THREE AMBASSADORS WITH EGON BAHR IN THE CHANCELLERY. WHETHER THOSE MEETINGS WERE WITH WISCHNEUSKI OR WITH SPANGENBERG WOULD BE UP TO THE FRG TO DECIDE. BUT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, AT LEAST, CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY TO HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTENTIONS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

3. US AND UK REPS HAD RECEIVED ONLY BRIEF FOREWARNING OF BOISSIEU'S INTENTION TO MAKE SUCH AN INTERVENTION AND WERE BASICALLY NON-COMMITAL IN THEIR RESPONSES. UK REP (HITCH) SAID HE THOUGHT BOISSIEU'S SUGGESTION SEEMED IN PRINCIPLE TO BE A GOOD IDEA. AS THE THREE AMBASSADORS WOULD OTHERWISE BE SEEING WISCHNEUSKI AND SPANGENBERG BILATERALLY FROM TIME TO TIME, IT MIGHT BE A SAVING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS' TIME TO HAVE JOINT MEETINGS. US REP SAID ONLY THAT ALL FOUR WERE AGREED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE CONSULTATIONS BUT THAT HE HAD NO SPECIFIC COMMENT TO MAKE ON MODALITIES AT THE MOMENT. HE THOUGHT THE TOPIC MIGHT BE ONE FOR DISCUSSION AT CONFIDENTIAL

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NEXT WEEK'S QUADRIpartite LUNCHEON.

4. THE FRG REP (LUECKING) STATED RATHER COOLY THAT IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA FOR THE THREE AMBASSADORS TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH STATE SECRETARY GEHLHOFF.

5. COMMENT: BOISSIEU'S SUGGESTION WAS PROMPTED IN PART, AT LEAST, BY CONTINUING IRRITATION OVER THE RATHER SPARSE BRIEFINGS WHICH WE ARE RECEIVING IN THE BONN GROUP ON FRG-GDR RELATIONS. HE WAS PARTICULARLY ANNOYED BY THE FACT THAT THE BONN GROUP HAD BEEN GIVEN ONLY A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE GDR AIDE MEMOIRE OF JANUARY 27, WHICH HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A VERY SERIOUS STEP AND WHICH THE FRG HAS NOT YET ANSWERED. BOISSIEU TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT, IN CONTRAST TO THIS SUPERFICIAL TREATMENT IN THE BONN GROUP (BONN 2078), THE FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN HAD READ THE FULL TEXT OF THE AIDE MEMOIRE TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EC NINE, COMMENTING ON IT SENTENCE BY SENTENCE AND

ANSWERING QUESTIONS.

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OMB-01 TRSE-00 SP-02 EB-04 /058 W
-----111849Z 011557 /46

P R 111818Z FEB 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5587
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6. LUECKING, WHO HAS NOT BEEN ATTENDING BONN GROUP MEETINGS REGULARLY, SEEMED SURPRISED THAT THE ALLIES HAD NOT RECEIVED COPIES OF THE GDR AIDE MEMOIRE, WHEN THE SUBJECT CAME UP IN ANOTHER CONTEXT AT THE FEBRUARY 7 MEETING. COPIES WERE IN FACT GIVEN US LATER IN THE WEEK, ALONG WITH A COPY OF THE FRG DRAFT REPLY. IF BOISSIEU'S INTERVENTION WAS A PLOY AIMED AT STIMULATING THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING ON INNER-GERMAN MATTERS IN THE BONN GROUP, IT SEEMS TO HAVE WORKED ON THIS OCCASION. BOISSIEU TELLS US, HOWEVER, THAT THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR PROBABLY WILL PROPOSE AT THE FEBRUARY 17 QUADRIPARTITE LUNCHEON THAT THE PRACTICE OF REGULAR MEETINGS WITH A CHANCELLERY OFFICIAL BE REINSTITUTED.

7. IN THE DAYS WHEN THE THREE AMBASSADORS MET FREQUENTLY WITH EGON BAHR, OSTPOLITIK WAS IN ITS ACTIVE PHASE AND THERE WERE ON-GOING NEGOTIATIONS FOR WHICH
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A REGULAR ALLIED INPUT WAS ESSENTIAL. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE RARE MEETINGS WHICH THE THREE AMBASSADORS

HAD WITH SANNE AFTER BAHR LEFT THE CHANCELLERY WERE NOT PARTICULARLY PRODUCTIVE OR INFORMATIVE. THIS MAY HAVE BEEN DUE IN PART TO THE FACT THAT OSTPOLITIK HAD MOVED INTO SOMETHING OF A HOLDING PATTERN AND IN PART TO THE PERSONALITY OF SANNE (AND THE NEW CHANCELLOR).

8. THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING AN ALLIED EFFORT TO REINSTITUTE REGULAR MEETINGS WITH WISCHNEWSKI OR SPANGENBERG IN THE CHANCELLERY. FOR ONE THING, THIS WOULD TEND TO UNDERCUT THE ROLE OF THE BONN GROUP AS THE FOCAL POINT OF OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GERMANS ON BERLIN AND INNER-GERMAN MATTERS. I BELIEVE OUR EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON STRENGTHENING RATHER THAN WEAKENING THE BONN GROUP. ALTHOUGH LUECKING HIMSELF HAS ON OCCASION EXPRESSED FRUSTRATION AT THE INABILITY OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON CONSULTATIONS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT ON INNER-GERMAN POLICY AND HAS SUGGESTED THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD COMPLAIN AT HIGH LEVELS, THE FOREIGN OFFICE BASICALLY WOULD NOT WELCOME A STEP WHICH WOULD REMOVE ONE OF THE ARGUMENTS THE FOREIGN OFFICE NOW CAN USE WITH THE CHANCELLERY FOR BEING CUT IN ON DEVELOPMENTS. MORE-OVER, FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER HIMSELF WOULD PROBABLY BE IRRITATED BY SUCH AN ALLIED MOVE. GIVEN THE PRESENT RIVALRY BETWEEN THE COALITION PARTNERS AND THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES POWER PLAYS BETWEEN THE CHANCELLERY AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE WHICH ARE BECOMING RESPECTIVELY SPD AND FDP PRESERVES, IT WOULD NOT SEEM TO BE IN OUR INTEREST TO ENTER INTO THE FRAY AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME.

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9. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FRENCH ARE CORRECT IN STATING THAT MORE INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS IS ESSENTIAL TO FULFILLMENT OF OUR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES IN BERLIN. ONE CURRENT EXAMPLE HAS TO DO WITH THE GDR REQUEST FOR INSTITUTING REGULAR SERVICE FROM SCHOENEFELD TO ZURICH, OVERFLYING THE FRG. WE HAVE VERY LITTLE INSIGHTS INTO WHAT LIES BEHIND THE FRG DECISION IN

PRINCIPLE TO GRANT THE GDR REQUEST, AND THIS LEAVES US
SOMEWHAT IN THE DARK AS WE TRY TO FORMULATE AN ALLIED
POSITION. EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST YEAR OR TWO HAS

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OMB-01 TRSE-00 SP-02 EB-04 /058 W
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SHOWN THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE SIMPLY IS NOT PRIVY TO
ALL OF THE DISCUSSIONS ON INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS OR
ELSE DOES NOT FEEL THAT IT IS AUTHORIZED TO SHARE WHAT
IT KNOWS WITH THE ALLIES.

10. A POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PRESENT SITUATION
MIGHT BE FOR THE THREE AMBASSADORS TO MEET PERHAPS EVERY
TWO OR THREE MONTHS WITH WISCHNEWSKI TO OBTAIN BETTER
INSIGHTS INTO LONG-RANGE THINKING ON WHERE THE FRG IS
HEADING IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE GDR, WHILE CONTINUING
TO EMPHASIZE THE ROLE OF THE BONN GROUP AND THE NEED
FOR MORE INFORMATION IN THAT FORUM ON DAY-TO-DAY
PROBLEMS AND NEGOTIATIONS.

11. IF, THEREFORE, AMBASSADOR WORMSER DOES MAKE A
FORMAL PROPOSAL TO GEHLHOFF AT THE FEBRUARY 17
QUADRIPARTITE LUNCHEON, MY INCLINATION IS TO GIVE
IT QUALIFIED SUPPORT. I WOULD STRESS THAT WE CONTINUE
TO LOOK TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, AT THE STATE SECRETARY

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LEVEL AND IN THE BONN GROUP, AS OUR PRINCIPAL INTER-
LOCUTORS ON ALL BERLIN-RELATED ISSUES, BUT WOULD
ADD THAT MORE FREQUENT BROAD RANGING DISCUSSIONS WITH
THE CHANCELLERY THAN WE HAVE HAD IN THE LAST YEAR
OR TWO WOULD ALSO BE VALUABLE.

11. THE DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS WOULD BE WELCOME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMUNITY RELATIONS, BERLIN TRIPARTITE MATTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BONN02673
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770049-1165
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770251/aaaabtcml
Line Count: 292
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 64fdf5c7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3347157
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLIED-FRG CONSULTATIONS ON BERLIN AND INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS BEGIN SUMMARY. THE FRENCH HAVE SUGGESTED
IN THE B
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GE, GC, US, UK, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbcl//SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/64fdf5c7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009